UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/1062
11 November 1998
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

LETTER DATED 11 NOVEMBER 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF DJIBOUTI TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the communiqué dated 10 November 1998 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Djibouti on the meeting of the Mediation Committee held in Ouagadougou on 7 and 8 November 1998 on the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Roble OLHAYE

Annex

Communiqué dated 10 November 1998 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Djibouti

The High Level Mediation meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on the border dispute between the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the State of Eritrea was held in Ouagadougou from 7 to 8 November 1998 under the chairmanship of Mr. Blaise Compaoré, President of Burkina Faso and current Chairman of OAU. Mr. Hassan Gouled Aptidon El Hadj, President of the Republic of Djibouti and current President of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Mr. Robert Mugabe, President of Zimbabwe, and Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary-General of OAU, also participated, as did Mr. Mohamed Sahnoun, Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations as observer.

The High Level Committee of OAU endorsed the recommendations submitted by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the countries members of the high level delegation and decided to submit the proposals contained in the Framework Agreement to the leaders of Ethiopia and Eritrea for their comments.

After consideration and discussion of the proposals contained in the Framework Agreement, the Ethiopian side gave its agreement in principle and stated that it would submit them to the National Assembly and Government of Ethiopia for consideration.

Instead of expressing its views on the proposals contained in the Framework Agreement, the Eritrean side, through its President, requested the exclusion of the Republic of Djibouti from the Mediation Committee, making serious accusations against our country by stating that the Republic of Djibouti was contributing to the war effort on the side of Ethiopia and against Eritrea.

In his wisdom, the President of the Republic, Mr. Hassan Gouled Aptidon El Hadj, refused to yield to this characteristic provocation from the Head of State of Eritrea, whose unavowed aim was to divert the debate from the subject under discussion, namely the proposals contained in the Framework Agreement. The President of the Republic left it to his peers from Burkina Faso and Zimbabwe to respond.

The President of the Republic, Mr. Hassan Gouled Aptidon El Hadj, while rejecting these polemics and false accusations, stressed the high quality of the report submitted by the Committee of Ambassadors and the Ministerial Committee and recalled that the recommendations contained in the Framework Agreement had been approved at the Summit meeting.

The Presidents of Burkina Faso and Zimbabwe reminded the Head of State of Eritrea that the Republic of Djibouti had been appointed to the Mediation Committee by OAU at its 34th Summit meeting on the same basis as their own countries. They also underlined the contribution of the Republic of Djibouti to the mediation work, both at the ambassadorial and ministerial levels and at the level of Heads of State, since the Committee had been established. They asked

him to confine his remarks to the item on the agenda and to state his views on the proposals contained in the Framework Agreement.

Faced with Eritrea's rejection of the recommendations contained in the Framework Agreement, the Heads of State declared that the city of Badme had certainly been under Ethiopian administration prior to 6 May and reiterated their demand for the withdrawal of the Eritrean armed forces from Badme and the surrounding area and the reinstallation of the Ethiopian administration in order to allow the redeployment of the OAU group of military observers as a preliminary to the work of delimitation and demarcation of the common border between the two countries.

The Government of the Republic of Djibouti rejects the false allegations made against it by the Head of State of Eritrea. Contrary to those unfounded accusations, the Republic of Djibouti has made considerable efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement of this conflict, which is weakening peace in our subregion. For instance, since the outbreak of hostilities, Mr. Hassan Gouled Aptidon El Hadj, as current President of IGAD, was the first Head of State to carry out a mediation mission, which led him in turn to Addis Ababa, Asmara and other capitals of countries in the subregion, and to expand contacts with the political leaders of the region.

The Republic of Djibouti continued its efforts during many meetings of the Mediation Committee.

The Republic of Djibouti refutes Eritrea's unfounded accusations and once again reaffirms its position of neutrality, as well as its willingness and availability to contribute to the search for a negotiated settlement of the conflict.